

BRITISH MUSEUM HAJJ EXHIBITION 2012

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Mecca tile

Tiles depicting the sanctuary at Mecca were made at the ceramic workshops of Iznik, during the Ottoman era from the mid 17th century. They show the sanctuary and its key locations in diagrammatic form and are often labelled. The tiles were made to be placed in mosques on the *qibla* wall facing the direction of Mecca, or were acquired by individuals perhaps as a memento of their Hajj.

This example contains within the arch the verses which enunciate the importance of the Ka'ba. 'The first House [of worship] appointed for mankind was that at Bakka (the old name for Mecca), full of blessings and guidance for all beings. In it are signs manifest: the Station of Abraham; whoever enters it attains security. Pilgrimage to the House is a duty mankind owes to God – whoever is able to make their way there.' (Qur'an 3:96-7).

About 1650
Iznik, Turkey
Stonepaste, underglaze painted
Victoria and Albert Museum, London
IS 25:26-1980



ABOVE THE MAHMAL IN WHICH THE CLOTH COVERING OF THE KA'BA WAS TRANSPORTED FROM CAIRO TO MECCA. THIS TRADITION WHICH COMMENCED WITH THE MAMLUKS ENDED IN THE YEAR 1926 AFTER BEDOUINS SEIZED CONTROL OF THE HOLY SITES.



Mahmal cloth, very few of these survived and this example is in the D.Khalili collection.



Haj Pilgrim's Banner.



Illuminated document with seal impressions of officials at the Sanctuary at Medina, to Shah Jahan, Begum of Bhopal

At the top of this document are three elaborate *tughras* (signatures) and the seal impressions of officials at the Sanctuary of the Prophet at Medina. Written in Arabic by these officials, it is addressed to Shah Jahan, Begum of Bhopal (ruled 1868–1901).

Shah Jahan was the daughter of Nawab Sikander. The document informed her that the official in charge of pilgrims from her state had been replaced by Ahmad Abu'l-Jud al-Madani.

Shah Jahan, Begum of Bhopal, 1868–1901. Medina, 1868. Original in the British Library, London. Digitized by the British Library, London. Digitized by the British Library, London. Digitized by the British Library, London.

Mecca tile panel

This three-dimensional depiction of the sanctuary is made over a panel of six tiles. It is inscribed with a poem by the Ottoman poet Süleyman Nahifi (died 1739). 'Whoever has the fortune to visit the Ka'ba, God forgives him and the one who is invited to the house is for certain the beloved.' Above the sanctuary is the Profession of Faith: 'There is no god but God, Muhammad is the Messenger of God.'

About 1650
Probably Iznik, Turkey
Stoneware underglaze painted
Benaki Museum, Athens
124

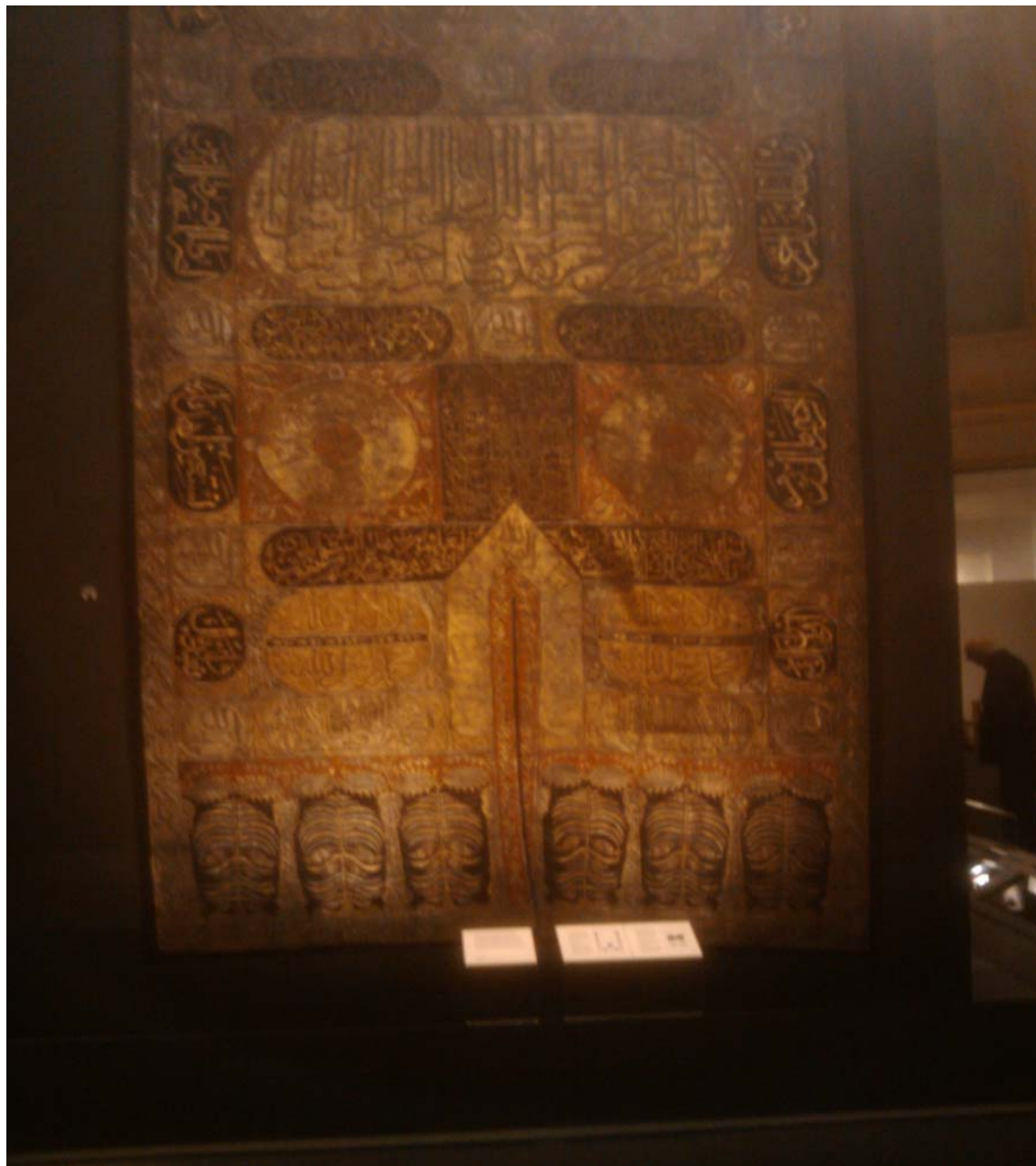




Mecca tile

This tile glazed in turquoise clearly displays the name of its owner, Shihab al-Din Efendi. The four schools of Islamic law are drawn and labelled around the Ka'ba: Shafi'i (top), Maliki (left), Hanafi (right) and Hanbali (base). These were named after four famous jurists recognised as orthodox by Sunni Muslims. They were represented at Mecca by distinguished scholars (known as Imams) from each of the schools.

About 1650–1750
Iznik, Turkey
Stoneware, underglaze painted
British Museum
2009.6039.1 Brooke Sewell Permanent Fund



Curtain for the door of the Ka'ba

This sumptuous and heavily embroidered textile was made to be placed over the door of the Ka'ba. It is lavishly decorated with bold arrangements of Arabic inscriptions from the Qur'an and other phrases. In the central black rectangle is the dedication in the name of the Ottoman sultan Abd al-Majid (ruled 1839–61). The curtain was made at the Dar al-Kiswa in Cairo, it was renewed annually, and was carried along with the *mahmal* as part of the Hajj caravan.

Dated 1263 AH/AD 1846–7
Cairo, Egypt
Silver and silver gilt-wires on black silk with red silk appliques
Nasser D. Khalil Collection of Islamic Art
TKT 408

Roundel inscribed with the name of God

This roundel may have been made to hang in a mosque. It is lavishly embroidered using the same technique as the Mecca textiles. In the centre are the words *Allah – Jala Jalalahu*, 'God may His glory be exalted'. Around the sides are verses from the Qur'an, 'It is He who sent down tranquillity into the hearts of the believers that they may add faith to their faith' (48:4). Within the outer band on the right it is embroidered with the signature cartouche of the Ottoman sultan Mahmud II (ruled 1808–39).

1808–39

Cairo, Egypt

Black silk, with red silk appliques, embroidered in silver and silver-gilt wire over cotton and silk thread padding

Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art

TXT 430



Bag for the key to the door of the Ka'ba

The keys to the Ka'ba are kept in embroidered bags, traditionally made in the Ka'ba textile factory in Cairo. The inscriptions indicate that this bag was commissioned by the Ottoman sultan Muhammad V Rashad (ruled 1909–18) and presented as a gift to the Ka'ba by Abbas Hilmi II the Khedive of Egypt. The bag is lined with the same type of textile used in the Prophet's tomb in Medina.

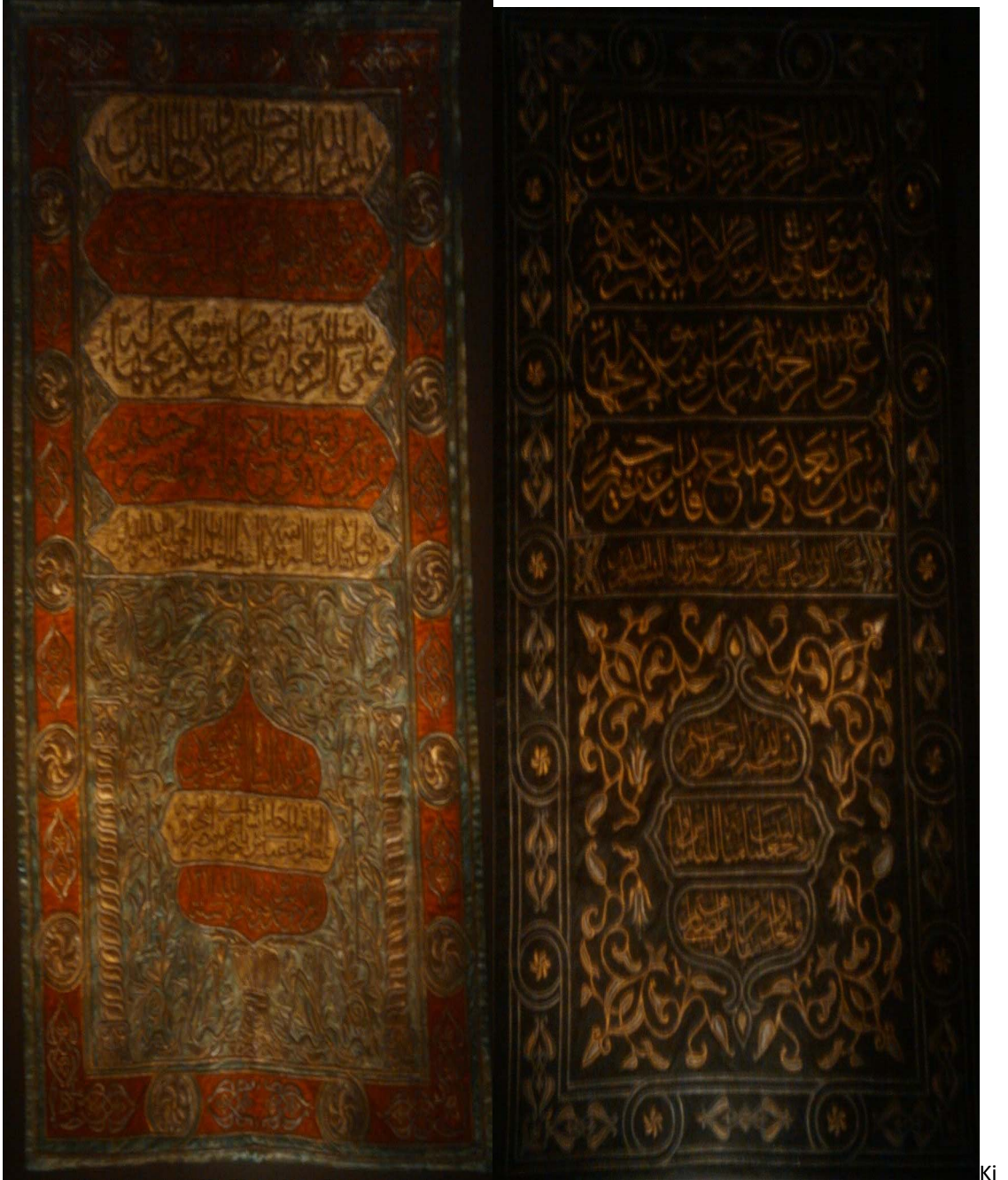
Dated 1327 AH/AD 1909–10
Cairo, Ottoman Egypt
Silk with red silk appliqué, embroidered in silver and
yellow-gold with over-binding of cotton thread
Husayn D. Khalil Collection of Islamic Art
TKT 454

Designs for the bag

These drawings are templates for the two sides of a key bag. The inscription under the arched design on the right is from Qur'an 4:58: 'God commands you to return things entrusted to you to their rightful owners.' The craftsman, Husayn Muhammad, has signed his name and written measurements and calculations along the side. The text on the template on the left is from Qur'an 27:30, concerning the story of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba.

About 1909
Cairo, Egypt
Pencil and ink on paper
Husayn D. Khalil Collection of Islamic Art
AK 10





swa Ka'ba cloths- curtain for door of repentance

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Cloth for interior of the Ka'ba

MEDINA



View of Medina, by Colonel Muhammad Sadiq Bey

This view was taken from the north of the city. In the background to the left can be seen the Prophet's mosque and tomb, with its prominent dome and four minarets. Outside the walls to the right are camels, luggage and tents of pilgrims. Sadiq Bey began taking photographs of Medina on his first visit to the Hijaz in 1881. 'No one before me' he noted 'has ever taken such photographs.' This was taken on his second visit in 1880.

About 1880 (photographed)
Albumen print
Victoria and Albert Museum
P&A 2037-1824



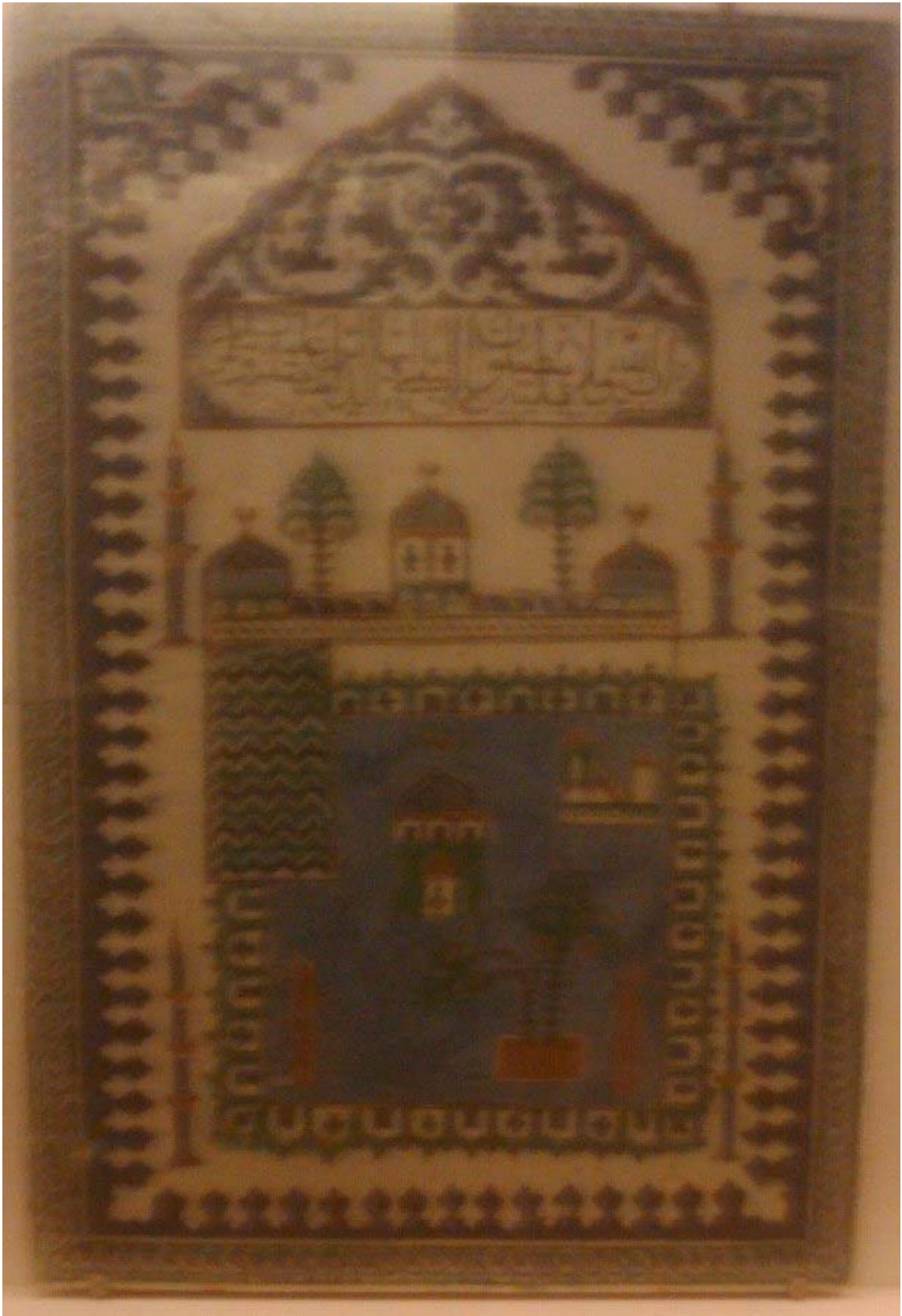
Prophet

Muhammed's PBUH grave's cloth cover and the same below.



Textile for the Prophet's tomb at Medina

The colour green is often associated with the Prophet Muhammad and this textile was made to go inside the grille of the tomb chamber or to cover the tomb itself. The inscriptions consist of blessings upon the Companions of the Prophet and prayers addressed to the Prophet Muhammad: 'God, my Lord, there is none but He. Muhammad is the beloved of my Lord'; and 'Prayers and Peace be upon you, O Messenger of God'.



MEDINA IZNIK TILE

Textile for the Prophet's mosque at Medina

This textile echoes the shape of a *mihrab* (prayer niche) with a lamp shown hanging from the top. It may have been made for one of several *mihrabs* in the Prophet's mosque. The textile bears the name of the Ottoman sultan Selim III (1789–1807) who ordered it to be made. His name appears in a roundel at the base and also between the candlesticks. At the top Qur'anic verses refer to the Prophet Muhammad: 'Those that lower their voice in the presence of the Prophet, their hearts has God tested for piety, for them is forgiveness and a great reward' (49:3).

1218 AH/AD 1803 (the numeral 1 is mistakenly embroidered as 2)
Silk with gold and silver-gilt wire
Cairo, Egypt
Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art
TXT 333





One of five candle stands known to be at the tomb of the Prophet Muhammed's mosque at Medina.(Benaki Museum Athens)



2 DIMENSIONAL IMAGE OF MEDINA



Above is a photo which is not at the British Museum but which you can buy from silk road books and photos, a lovely vintage albumen nineteenth century photo of the Prophet's grave PBUH. For enquiries about this photo please contact us at silk_road_books@yahoo.com